

THE

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SHEKEL



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The Jewish-American Hall of Fame 40th Anniversary Medal

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Edward Schuman. Editor

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President's Message

By Mel Wacks

Some members of AINA have stopped collecting and may be wondering what to do with their collections. If you are interested in selling coins, medals, paper money, etc. you can contact any of the advertisers in *The Shekel* and ask their advice. You are also welcome to call me at 818-225-1348 or email me at ainapresident@lycos.com for advice. The easiest items to sell are gold, and next are the silver pieces. Mint sets and bronze medals are the hardest to sell.

For those pieces that you don't sell, I suggest that you see if anyone in your family might be interested—children, grandchildren, etc. You would be passing on a hobby involving history, art and possibly heritage. Look what my father started, when he gave me a small pouch of old coins when I was 10—it has given me a lifetime of enjoyment!

Another possibility, would be to contribute them to a non-profit that could make good use of them. And here I will make a pitch for donating material to AINA. We can use Israel coins, medals, etc. to encourage new collectors. We have given out over 100 silver coins and medals to new members—that were contributed to us by former AINA President Arnold Kagan. I am sure that he got a good feeling by doing this mitzvah (good deed) as well as a tax deduction. This year, Donald Sussman donated a complete collection of AINA medals—and we used these for an exhibit at the convention of the American Israel Numismatic Association. And we recently received Israel coins and mint sets from Edward Chayet, that we will soon put to good use. Many thanks to these and future generous AINA members. Please contact me if you are considering donating numismatic material to AINA.

I am pleased to welcome Michael Mooney to the board, and look forward to meeting him personally at next year's American Numismatic Association Convention in Boston. I hope as many AINA members as possible will be able to attend the AINA meeting held there—more about this later. Michael is heading up an Internet discussion group on Israel Coins and Stamps that AINA members and other interested parties are invited to join. (1) You must join Facebook; then (2) type Israel Coins Stamps into the search box in the top right corner, (3) select "Groups" from the column on the left side of the page, (4) select the Israel Coin and Stamp group from the center of the page, and (5) request to join the group. The group all ready includes about 100 members from around the world.

Happy Collecting


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The Editor's Page

By Edward Schuman

It is again this time of the year when we wish all our members a very Happy and Healthy New Year. In South Florida where we live the weather hardly changes for us, but we know many of our member live in the freeze belt. All we can say is enjoy the cold.

We have received many letters from older members bemoaning the fact that their prize collection of Israel Coins and Medals is unwanted by their offspring or nieces and nephews. Our president has alluded to these facts in his message. Your editor has a "ton" of material and at age 83 one realizes that time is growing short. "The Collector" by Shmuel Aviezer in this issue is an unusual article which is on the subject.

One idea for those who have a cell phone camera is to photograph the coins you want to dispose of and put them on auction on eBay under Israel Coins and Paper Money. If they are reasonably priced you will get bids. There are thousands of Israelis who buy and sell on eBay regularly. And there is also the melting pot for silver and gold medals and coins, though I personally do not have the heart to melt Israel coins.

You will find many articles of interest in this issue. I particularly enjoyed researching the article on Transylvanian Jewry as it is a subject rarely in the news. I was amazed at the beautiful synagogue as depicted on a post card of that era. The story of Jean LaFitte, the Jewish pirate has been around for awhile but we were unable to print it until a medal of LaFitte was found to illustrate the article. Bob Leonard has researched the Ben and Sylvia Odesser Numismatic Award given for the best article annually published in the Shekel and has listed all past winners of this award. And finally, don't miss reading Donna Sims' profile which features your editor.

Till the next issue



P.S. If any members would like to obtain an Israel 25th Anniversary Platinum Medal in the original packing under the melt price please contact me.

The Jewish-American Hall of Fame 40th Anniversary Medal

The Jewish-American Hall of Fame is currently the longest series of art medals being issued in the United States! These works of medallic art have been called *one of the most important series of medals issued in America in recent years* in the 1990 catalog of the Congress of International Federation of Medallic Art, held in Finland. They are prized by collectors around the world, and are in the collections of The British Museum, the American Numismatic Society, the National Museum of Monetary History (Sweden), the Smithsonian Institution's Archives of American Art, the American Jewish Historical Society, the Magnes Museum, etc. Sales of these medals have made possible the award-winning educational web site www.amuseum.org, that is visited by over a million students and others from around the world every year. The Jewish-American Hall of Fame plaques will soon be on permanent exhibit at the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Richmond.

Jewish-American Hall of Fame founder Mel Wacks was born in the Bronx on July 10, 1938. He began collecting at the age of 10, after his father gave him a pouch of old coins. Mel earned Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in Electrical Engineering at CCNY and NYU, respectively, but found his true calling in the world of numismatics. Mel founded the Jewish-American Hall of Fame at the Magnes Museum in 1969, to honor the unique contributions made by Jewish Americans to all phases of the American way of life. Mel is proud that he has designed the reverses of the medals honoring Houdini, Isaac Bashevis Singer and Elie Wiesel, as well as this medal. Mel is also an expert in ancient Judean coins, and is the author of *The Handbook of Biblical Numismatics* that is available free on the internet at www.amuseum.org/book. In addition, he has been on the Board of the American Israel Numismatic Association for most of the past 40 years, and has been serving as President since 2002.

Eugene Daub's sculptures are in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution and the British Museum. He has achieved the highest honors for his medallic art – the American Numismatic Society's Saltus Award and the American Numismatic Association's Numismatic Art Award for Excellence in Medallic Sculpture. Before sculpting the lifelike portrait of Mel Wacks, Eugene created The Jewish-American Hall of Fame medals commemorating Moe Berg (2006), Milton Berle (2008) and Barney Ross (2009).

Limited editions of 120 bronze, 70 pure silver and 18 gold-plated silver medals have been issued to commemorate the 40th anniversary of The Jewish-American Hall of Fame and the 70th birthday of Mel Wacks, founder and director. The over 2-inch, 3 oz., high relief 40th Anniversary/70th Birthday medals are available on a first come-first served basis for contributions of \$35 for bronze and \$100 for pure silver (the gold-plated version is sold out) to The Jewish-American Hall of Fame, 5189 Jefferdale Ave., Woodland Hills, CA 91364, or call (818) 225-1348. Mention that you are an AINA member and you can take a 10% discount.

The Story of Transylvanian Jewry

Transylvania is district which has formed a part of Hungary since 1867. According to one tradition, the first Jewish settlers of this region were subjects of the Persian king Xerxes, who fled there after the battle of Salamis; while another tradition states that they were colonized there by the Dacian King Decebulus. It is certain, at all events, that Jews lived in Transylvania soon after the country had become a part of Dacia during the Roman period.

Ordinances passed by the national assembly in 1650 provided that Jews should be restricted commercially, and should be forced, like the Greeks, to wear distinctive articles of clothing and badges. The intolerant grand duke George Rakoczy II. deprived them of the right of residence in fortified towns. These provisions, however, were never carried out. Emperor Joseph II., in his patent of 1781, specified Gyulafehérvár as the residence for the Jews, and while the same provision was made by the government as late as 1845, the Jews have always lived in various parts of the country, although their numbers may have been small.

Transylvania belonged to Hungary until 1920, at which time it was given to Romania. On August 30, 1940, Northern Transylvania was transferred back to Hungary, as a reward for siding with Germany. Northern Transylvania had a population of 2.5 million, including about 165,000 Jews. Most lived in the areas of Dej, and Cluj. Many Transylvanian Jews were happy to join Hungary after 20 years under Romania; however, they were soon subjected to Hungary's anti-Jewish regulations.

The Germans occupied Hungary in March 1944, and quickly began readying the Jews for the "Final Solution." They divided Northern Transylvania into two districts. Jews were not allowed to travel or communicate with Jews in other areas, so each community was left isolated. The only way to make contact was through the Jewish Council of Budapest, which usually just passed on instructions from the German and Hungarian authorities. On May 2 Jews were forbidden to leave their homes, except for one short hour in the morning to shop. The next day, the Nazis began transferring Jews to ghettos. The operation ran smoothly and took only 10 days. There was hardly any resistance. Some Jews did not realize what was going to happen to them, others thought they were being sent away to work, and some hoped the Allies would soon win the war.

In the villages and smaller towns, the Jews were gathered in their synagogues and community buildings and after a few days, they were moved to the ghettos located in larger cities. In Dej, the Jews were moved to the forest. Each ghetto had its own *Judenrat*, which carried out the instructions given them by the main Jewish Council or by the Hungarian or German authorities. Each ghetto also had a building, nicknamed the "mint," where Jews were tortured into revealing the whereabouts of their valuables.

The Jews did not stay long in the ghettos---131,641 Jews were soon deported to Auschwitz. The transports lasted from May 16 to June 27, 1944. Only the Jews working in labor units and a few exemptions were left behind. Romania retained control of Southern Transylvania. In 1941 there were 40,937 Jews living there.

During the reign of the "National Legionary Government" in 1940, local authorities terrorized the Jews of Southern Transylvania. Their property was systematically looted and they were kicked out of their homes. Hundreds of Jews were tortured into "selling" their property to the authorities. However, when the Legionary government toppled in January 1941, the situation improved slightly. The conditions in the forced labor units were somewhat alleviated, and few Southern Transylvanian Jews were sent to labor battalions.

During the summer of 1941, Ion Antonescu, the head of the Romanian government, ordered all Romanian Jews---including those in Southern Transylvania---expelled from their villages and towns. The operation was executed haphazardly, causing the Jews much distress. During the expulsion, the authorities found that the large cities where they had planned to station the Jews were not suitable. Thus, in late 1941 and early 1942, the Jews who had already been sent to the larger towns were now moved to makeshift ghettos. By the summer of 1942 they were faced with another threat: deportation.

By the summer of 1943, the Jews' situation had improved somewhat. In 1944 they themselves were able to rescue thousands of Jews from Northern Transylvania and Hungary, where Jews were being arrested and deported. However, the circumstances of the Jews of Southern Transylvania changed in September 1944, soon after the Romanian army surrendered to the Soviets. The Hungarian army occupied an area along the northern border of Southern Transylvania. Most Jews fled the region, but the Hungarians murdered any they could find. The area was liberated that month, but when the Romanian army reoccupied most of Southern Transylvania, no Jews were left.

A most unusual item was located on Ebay and is used to illustrate this article. It is a coin issued by the firm of Mor and Levin which has a menorah and two hebrew letters a lamed and a mem. The reverse side contained the figured $\frac{1}{2}$ and the word Nagyvarad.



The Jewish community of Nagyvárad, as the city was known under Hungarian rule, suffered terribly during the years of the second world war. Men between 18 and 54 years of age were taken for slave labor in the Hungarian Labor Service where many of them died. Children were barred from schools. Families were stripped of their possessions.

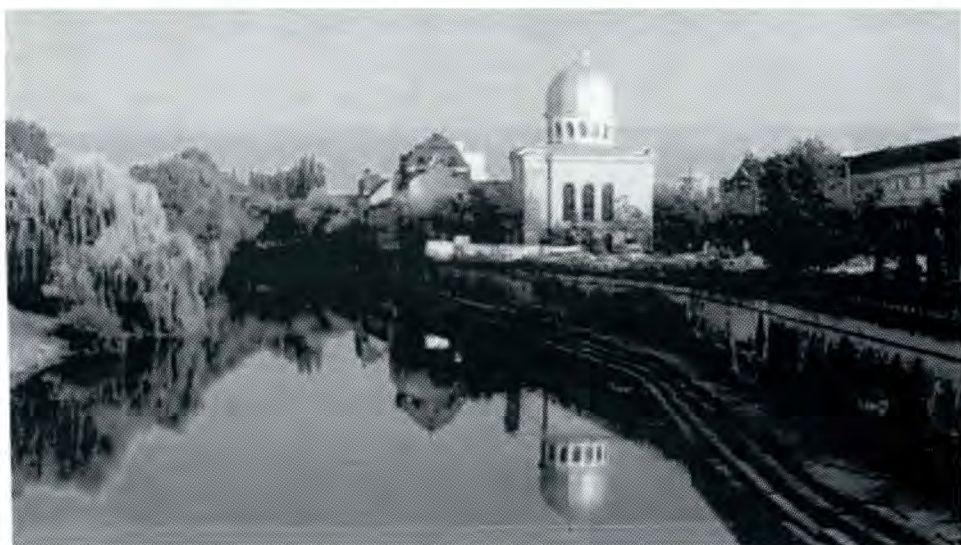
In the spring of 1944 two ghettos were established not far from city's center by the main Nazi specialist. The brutalities were organized by an assigned mayor from the west. About 30,000 Jewish citizens, and some from nearby areas, were forced into the ghettos. Most endured the inhuman conditions; many were tortured; some committed suicide; a very few escaped. Within weeks, the ghettos were emptied and all were forced aboard freight trains in the area of Balcescu Park, two or three thousand people a day, a total of seven shipments. They were delivered to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where the vast majority met the fate of the six million European Jews lost in the war.

Of those very few who survived, some returned to their city, again under Romanian rule. A small new Jewish community formed, attracting survivors from nearby areas as well. Many who had lost spouses and children quickly remarried. New families were established. The community grew within a few years to perhaps one-quarter the size it had once been. As they worked to recover and build new lives, the Jewish survivors turned their attention to building a monument in memory of those they lost. They completed and dedicated it in 1946.

Under the Communist regime imposed in 1945 there were new hardships. Romania grew increasingly intolerant of Jewish independence. Newly-formed Zionist organizations were liquidated, their leaders often arrested and imprisoned. Most Jews decided to leave and make lives elsewhere, but applying for travel privileges could label a person an enemy of the state. Many lost their jobs and a few were incarcerated in Gulag-style forced labor camps, established throughout Romania under the Stalin-influenced dictatorship.

In the 1950s, Romania began selling its Jewish citizens to Israel, at first in exchange for services such as factory construction and later for hard currency. Eventually Ceausescu extended the practice to include the sale of Germans and Romanians who wanted to move to Germany. He is reported to have said that Romania's most important exports were "Jews, Germans and oil."

Most of Nagyvarad remaining Jewish families emigrated to Israel, North America, Western Europe and Australia. Today, while there are only a few hundred still living in Nagyvarad, there are new generations and large numbers throughout the world with direct ties to the city. Some among them have a deep and abiding interest in the place that was home to their brothers and sisters, parents and grandparents.



The Magnificent Zion Temple built in 1876

PROFILE OF AINA'S EDITOR

Edward Schuman was born on Thanksgiving Day in 1926 in New York City. His father was born in Philadelphia in 1890 and was the oldest son of a family of Russian immigrants who came to America in the 1880's under the Baron Hirsch endeavor. Ed's father was one of the first feather duster manufacturers at that time but was wiped out during the stock market crash of 1929. Growing up in Brooklyn, Ed attended public schools and later attended Brooklyn College. He left college after his mother passed away in order to help his father full time at the factory. Ed married Florence in 1949 and they just recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a party that was attended by both of their children, seven grandchildren and dozens of relatives and friends.

It was in 1968 that Ed was forced to move the business to Miami after an attempt was made to organize the factory by a corrupt union. Eddie took enough supplies with him to open up his business and three months later, Florence and his dad joined him. It was just over twenty years later that the Schuman Duster Company was sold to Texas Feathers. In order to familiarize and introduce the new owners to the business, Ed and Florence spent three months in Texas. Several trips were made in order to introduce them to their many suppliers. They covered South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Israel, China and Macau. All in all during their lifetime Florence and Ed traveled to Israel 13 times, to Argentina 6 times, the Orient 6 times and all parts of Europe except Greece. One of Eddie's greatest thrills was at the Choral Synagogue in Moscow where he was granted an Aliah before the Torah.

After being retired for several years, Ed and Florence purchased a warehouse in North Miami and started a feather wholesale business. His former suppliers were happy that he returned and the business prospered. Grandson Paul joined Ed and Florence in the business three years ago. Today Schuman Feathers is the largest importer of ostrich and fancy feathers in the country, with sales to domestic and over seas accounts.

Eddie became a collector around the age of 10 when one of his Dad's cousins came for a visit and gave him a handful of Indian head cents, some flying eagle cents (no 1856), and 2 and 3-cent pieces. Thus began his hobby of collecting which continues to this very day. Eddie was in his 20's when he joined the Brooklyn Coin Club and the Queens County Coin Club. Later he joined the Long Island Coin Club, the Bronx Coin Club and the New York Numismatic Society. During these years, he collected U.S. coins, gold and pattern coins. He had exhibited for

years at the Metropolitan New York Coin Conventions. It was in 1967 that Ed helped to organize the American Israel Numismatic Association (AINA), along with the late Morris Bram and the late Ed Janis. Ed served as President and as Vice President of AINA for many years and holds Life Member #3.

Ed and Florence traveled to New York countless times to attend and help out at the AINA Conventions, which in his mind, and in the minds of many others, were among the finest conventions held anywhere. The Schuman's also represented AINA at many of the FUN conventions held in South Florida and at ANA conventions throughout the country. Through the years, the Schuman home was the scene of many AINA get-togethers and parties.

Ed began to edit the Shekel some 25 years ago and has written hundreds of articles through this span of time. He also prepares the magazine for the printer by pasting the pages in an appropriate manner. It was along with fellow collector, the late Sidney Olson that Ed's collection expanded to include Jewish paper, checks, receipts and bonds. The two collectors accumulated whatever there was and wherever it was, which was not too hard to do considering their number of visits to Israel.

Today, AINA's editor suffers from kidney failure and is on dialysis but still manages to edit The Shekel. Eddie has started to write articles in The Shekel about many of the treasures in his collection and hopefully he will be writing many more for our reading pleasure.

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG



The Rothschild of Hamburg

Salomon Heine was born October 19th 1767 in Hanover, Germany. He was penniless when he came to Hamburg in 1784 and in the following years acquired sizeable assets. It was common knowledge at the time that he was both benefactor and patron to his nephew Heinrich Heine. Because of his wealth - by the time of his death his estate was worth an estimated € 110 million - he was called "Rothschild of Hamburg", in allusion to the Rothschild banking family.

Heine learned the trade of banking at *Bankhaus Popert* in Hamburg. Subsequently he started his own business as a draft broker, cooperating closely with *Emanuel Anton von Halle*. In 1797, together with Marcus Abraham Heckscher, he founded the *Heckscher & Co.* merchant bank. In 1818, now being the sole executive director, he changed the company's name to *Bankhaus Salomon Heine*. During the following years he rose to becoming one of Hamburg's most successful bankers of the time.

Salomon Heine let young Heinrich Heine, his nephew, work and learn at his Hamburg bank *Heckscher & Co.* and eventually offered Heinrich a position with the cloth company *Harry Heine & Comp.* Heinrich though, who had fallen in love with Salomon's daughter Amalie, devoted himself chiefly to poetry and took very little interest in business. Soon he had to declare bankruptcy.

Salomon Heine was angered by his nephew choosing poetry as a way of life, in which he himself saw no money. His disapproval became apparent in the dictum: Had he learned something proper he needed not write books. Nonetheless, Salomon paid for Heinrich's studies in Jurisprudence and until his death he regularly granted Heinrich financial aid.

Salomon Heine's bounty and his position as benefactor are traded by an anecdote: emissaries from a religious order who intended to build a hospital were asking wealthy Hamburg residents for donations. The order was then told to first contact the Jewish banker Heine, the people would donate the same amount as Heine plus one additional Thaler. The friars told Heine of the merchants' reaction and he let them name the price of the hospital's construction. Heine paid exactly one half, so the other businessmen, bound by their words, were obliged to finance the rest.

Moreover, Heine worked in Hamburg for the rest of his life. After the disastrous great fire of Hamburg in 1842 he participated in the city's

reconstruction with his private assets. One of his greatest achievements was the founding of the Israelite Hospital of Hamburg in remembrance of his wife Betty who had died in 1837. An illustration of the medal commemorating the event is pictured below.

Heinrich Heine lauded his uncle's foundation in the form of a poem, "*Das neue Israelitische Hospital zu Hamburg*", which was published in the volume "*Neue Gedichte*".

Salomon Heine passed away on December 23, 1844. What Heine as a personality meant for Hamburg was most clearly shown though at his funeral. It turned into a demonstration of connecting popularity: thousands of people, Jews as well as Christians and spontaneously accompanied Heine on his last journey to the Ottensen Jewish cemetery.



KABBALAH MEDALS ISSUED BY ISRAEL

By Mel Wacks

Jewish tradition has long held that Kabbalah is so complicated and so easily misunderstood that students may only begin to approach it with a strong background in Jewish law and only after age 40. The "Kabbalah" entry in the Encyclopaedia Judaica takes over 80 pages. Thus, it is a real challenge to present the concepts of Kabbalah on a medal that a person can hold in his or her hands. But that is exactly what Israel has attempted in producing a Kabbalah medal—it's first issue in the standard size of 1 oz. of pure silver or gold—as well as a bronze edition.



Design by Ruben Nutels.

To the left of the Menorah are leaves and 10 pomegranates, alluding to the 10 Sefirot and the important work of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero (1522-70) entitled "Pomegranate Orchard," an encyclopedic presentation of the teachings of the *Zohar* and all kabbalist thought up to that time, completed when he was only 27; it became one of the most popular and influential texts of *kabbalah* and established him as a spiritual leader. Around the border, in Hebrew, is written: "And they who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament" (Daniel 12:3), a promise of a bright future for those who merit it and a subtle reference to the Book of the *Zohar*.



Design by Aron Shevo.

In the background behind the tree are the first Hebrew verses in the Torah, the Book of Law, describing the Creation of the World, without spaces between the words. Between the letters of the Hebrew word "בראשית" (*Bereshit* meaning "In the beginning"), are the Hebrew letters forming "Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai", to whom the Book of the Zohar is attributed, and "Torat Or" (Doctrine of Light, referring to the Kabbalah), on either side of the tree. In the right-hand border, in Hebrew, is "Wisdom of the Kabbalah" and in the left-hand border "KABBALAH".

For those interested in delving further into this fascinating area of study—that has received a huge PR boost from modern adherents like Madonna—an explanatory booklet about the Kabbalah is included with each medal. Medals are available from the Israel Coins and Medals Corporation (israelmint.com) in bronze (26.8 gm., 38.6 mm., 1,800 maximum), pure silver (31.1 gm., 38.6 mm., 888 maximum), or pure gold (31.1 gm., .9999 fine, 38.6 mm., 120 maximum).

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RABBI YITZCHAK KADURI

Yitzchak Kaduri, who died January 28 2006 was a renowned Mizrahi Haredi rabbi and kabbalist who devoted his life to Torah study and prayer on behalf of the Jewish people. His blessings and amulets were also widely sought to cure people of illnesses and infertility. At the time of his death, estimates of his age ranged from 106 to 110.

He was born in Baghdad, which was then part of the Ottoman Turkish *vilayets*, to Rabbi Katchouri Diba ben 'Aziza, a spice trader. His exact year of birth is unknown. As a youngster, Kaduri excelled in his studies and began learning Kabbalah while still in his teens, a study that would last his entire life.

Rabbi Kaduri moved to the British Mandate of Palestine in 1923 upon the advice of the elders of Baghdad, who hoped that his scholarship and piety would stop the incursion of Zionism in the post-World War I state. It was here that he changed his name from Diba to Kaduri.

Few people wait almost a century before joining the political fray, yet the Israeli rabbi did precisely that. In May 1996 he probably swung the crucial balance of 29,000 voters who ensured that the Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu was elected prime minister of Israel. He did so by distributing thousands of "magic" amulets to his devotees, who were then obliged to vote for Netanyahu in the prime ministerial poll and for the Orthodox Shas party in the simultaneous party elections. Kaduri also bolstered Netanyahu's platform of "restoring Jewish values" by publicly endorsing him before polling day.

He was small, bent and wizened, invariably draped in the white robes of an oriental Jewish kabbalist (or purveyor of Jewish mysticism). But images of his benignly smiling face, which dangled from the rear-view mirrors of taxis scuttling between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, indicated his popularity.

Once the centenarian acquired a taste for politics, it seemed he could not stop. He was soon urging more building at Har Homa, a controversial development south of Jerusalem and something of a rightwing cause célèbre. He also initiated bold personal bids for peace with Israel's arch-enemies, Syria and Iran. At one point he suggested trading the Golan Heights for an accord with Damascus - to the chagrin of Likud and Labour alike - though he subsequently changed his mind and ruled out returning the territory.

He lived in a poor neighborhood, attended Porat Yosef yeshiva (or rabbinical seminary) and, around 1930, transferred to Beit El (House of

rabbinical seminary) and, around 1930, transferred to Beit El (House of God) yeshiva, a center for studying the mystical tradition in Judaism. Three years later he had his own consulting rooms in the Old City, where he taught clients how to predict the future by divining secret texts hidden in the Psalms, or how to summon angels to help overcome personal problems. He refused money for these services, and worked as a bookbinder to keep body and soul together

If dispensing blessings was one of Kaduri's stocks-in-trade, so was sending curses. In 1991 he sought out the name of Saddam Hussein's mother, so that he could send efficacious *pulsa denura* - Aramaic for "lashings of fire" - against this enemy of the Jews. Kaduri was also implicated in the death curse on Yitzhak Rabin, which was eerily pronounced just a month before the Labor premier's assassination in November 1995. Although he was never proved to be a signatory, in the eyes of secular detractors guilt by association was good enough.

Undaunted, Kaduri intoned over Netanyahu in March 1997: "May the Almighty keep and protect the prime minister; may he live long, defeat all his enemies and win the next elections

By 1998, however, Kaduri was coming under attack. The liberal daily, Ha'aretz, sardonically named him Man of the Year. Even former Sephardi chief rabbi Ovadiah Yosef questioned the credentials of a man who had never written a single religious article, let alone a book. Kaduri, in turn, criticized celebrities who claimed to have taken up Judaism's mystical tradition. When Madonna made a midnight visit to the grave of a sage while visiting Israel in 2004, he asserted: "It is forbidden to teach Kabbalah to a non-Jew."

Six years ago, Kaduri spoke of a vision in which heaven blessed a little known Israeli presidential candidate, Moshe Katsav. As a result all 17 Shas MPs voted for Katsav, defeating the favorite, Shimon Peres. On his death, an estimated 200,000 people filled the streets of Jerusalem for his funeral



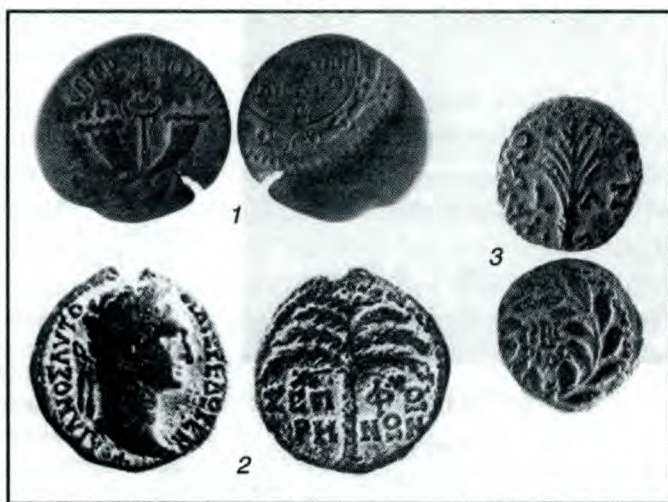
Early Coins of Sepphoris, Neapolis, and Tiberias

by David Hendin

Reprinted from the Celator

In general, the city coins of ancient Israel, Palestine, and Transjordan are viewed as standard Roman provincial issues. However, the early coins of three cities, Sepphoris, Neapolis, and Tiberias, certainly reflect the religious sensitivities of the majority of their respective populations: Samaritans in Neapolis and Jews in the two Galilean cities, Sepphoris and Tiberias, according to Alia Kushnir-Stein writing in the current issue of *Israel Numismatic Research*.

In her article, "Reflection of Religious Sensitivities on Palestinian City Coinage," Stein writes that her assumption "is based on the total absence of human or animal representation on some of the earliest series of these cities' coins, while a few subsequent series show the portrait of a ruling emperor on the obverses, but are consistent in avoiding human or animal representation on the reverses."



Among the early city coins with aniconic reverse types are:
1. Nero coin with crossed cornucopias, Sepphoris (GBC 586).
2. Domitian coin of Neapolis with palm tree (Photo courtesy of Mel Wacks).
3. Herod Antipas coin with palm branch (GBC 521).

The earliest coins of Neapolis, which became a "polis" in 72/73 under Vespasian, were struck under Domitian. The earliest coins depict an inscription in wreath, crossed cornucopias within wreath, palm tree, two ears of grain, and vine branch. Later issues struck under Antoninus Pius and subsequent emperors, however, have completely pagan reverse types.

Early coins were struck at Sepphoris under Nero, Stein believes that the earliest issues (GBC 586 and 587) were strictly city coins, while Meshorer suggests that they are early coins of Agrippa II. Those coins, however, depict only cornucopias and wreaths.

The second series of Sepphoris coins were struck under Trajan, with his portrait, and carry reverse motifs of wreath, palm tree, caduceus, and two ears of grain. Subsequent coins of Sepphoris, beginning with Antoninus Pius, carry the city name Diocaesarea, and it also acquired the titles of "sacred, inviolable and autonomous."

Herod Antipas (4 BC-34 AD) was the founder of Tiberias, and struck the first coins there. All of the Antipas coins are without graven images, and carry reeds, branches, trees, bunch of dates, and wreaths. Antipas' final series carries the name of Caligula, which is the first time the coins of a Jewish ruler carried the name of a Roman emperor.

A "victory coin" issued by Agrippa II and possibly commemorating the victory of the Romans in the Jewish War also carries a palm branch motif (GBC 588). The normal city coinage of Tiberias began under Trajan, and all carry imperial portraits, and the first series of Trajan's coins carry Tyche and Hygieia as well as crossed cornucopias and an anchor.

Until now, the explanation for these coinages suggest that the change to purely pagan images was made under Hadrian. A. H. M. Jones previously observed that the facts around the changing of the nature of the coins of these cities "suggest that Hadrian disfranchised the Jewish and Samaritan aristocracies which had hitherto ruled these three cities and entrusted their government to pagans, whether the existing pagan population or new settlers we have no means of telling."

Stein, however, sees another possible scenario. While previous theories imply "that Jews and Samaritans, who governed these cities at the time, made a kind of compromise with the Gentiles by putting imperial portraits on the obverse of the coins. However, a question may well be asked whether it could not have been the other way around: that the two cities were already governed at that time by pagans, who would have compromised with the majority of the population of their cities by choosing neutral symbols for the reverses. While the former scenario implies a painful sacrifice, the latter would involve no real sacrifice at all."

"This second possibility seems never to have been considered, although we do have a well known local example of a concession made by Gentile authorities to Jewish religious sensitivities in the matter of coinage. These are the so-called 'procuratorial coins' that were minted intermittently from 5/6 to 58/9 AD. No imperial portraits appear on the obverse of any of these coins, nor are there human or animal representations on either of their sides. The fabric of these coins points to Jerusalem as the place of their manufacture."

Kushnir-Stein concludes, "The aftermath of the first Jewish revolt would certainly be a fitting time for imperial intervention in the composition of the governing bodies of those local cities that had predominantly non-Greek populations."

The author also discusses in this article some interesting subtitles of the dating of the coins of Agrippa II, which we will deal with at another time, although if you are curious, Kushnir-Stein's article is highly recommended.

The Jewish Pirate

Jean Lafitte's diary states he was born in Port-Au-Prince, Saint Domingue, in 1782. His mother died the next year, so Jean and his siblings were raised by their grandmother, the Sephardic Jew Zora Nadrimal. She told them of her flight from Spain to France with their mother to escape the Inquisition, which tortured and murdered their grandfather Abhorad.

The family lived a peaceful life in Santo Domingo until the Slave Insurrection of 1791. The Lafitte brothers escaped to Martinique where they purchased a Letter of Marque which gave them permission to seize and loot enemy vessels. Jean married a Danish Jewess, Cristiana Levine, and after four profitable years of privateering the family left for France with everything they owned. On the way their ship was taken by a Spanish Man of War. They were stripped and dumped on a uninhabited sand cay in the Caribbean. Days later an American schooner picked them up and took them to New Orleans where Cristiana shortly died of exhaustion and fever.

Meanwhile Jean's brother Pierre, also a privateer, was apprehended for smuggling. The now indigent brothers briefly worked for U.S. Customs and then got back into pirating. Jean bought a blacksmith shop (built 1772) to front his evil businesses. Pierre and Jean were joined by their brothers René Béluche and Dominique You a former artillery gunner for Napoleon. They built a headquarters in Barataria Bay.

Captured Spanish vessels were maneuvered into the bay and, by 1811, Barataria was a thriving community with 32 armed warships, more ships than in the entire US navy. Businessmen from New Orleans arrived at night to buy pirates' loot. The operation was so huge, it affected the economy of the whole Gulf. New Orleans banking declined and it was apparent that Lafitte was monopolizing Louisiana's import trade and the commerce of the entire Mississippi Valley.

In 1814 Great Britain dispatched an armada and 8,000 men to take Louisiana. Sure of success, they brought along a complete civil governmental staff to rule over the soon-to-be established Crown Colony. The officers offered Lafitte 30,000 pounds sterling and a commission in the British Navy if he would guide their troops through the maze of waterways to New Orleans. Lafitte had traveled the bayous for years and knew them better than anyone; he had even mapped the navigable waterways within 10,000 square miles of delta.

Lafitte pretended to accept the British offer but instead sent word to New Orleans that invasion was imminent. In exchange for a governor's

pardon he and his buccaneers would help defend the city. With more than two thousand men under his command, Lafitte could perhaps have turned back the British himself. But instead of accepting Jean's help, governor Claiborne let a Commodore Patterson attack Barataria. Patterson destroyed the settlement and stole loot worth half a million dollars, claiming it as spoils of war -- though none of it was ever seen by the government. He rounded up and imprisoned all the pirates he could find.

The governor's smugness was brief: reliable sources confirmed that the British were coming; within days their Armada arrived. Andrew Jackson, Commander in Chief of New Orleans, had almost no men or ships and so, amusingly, Claiborne was forced to free the imprisoned pirates (the "Hellish Banditi" as Jackson called them). He needed them desperately.

Jean and Pierre guided the American forces through the marshland maze. An assortment of 4,000 Tennesseans, Choctaw tribesmen, free blacks, Creoles and of course pirates defeated the British in the Battle of New Orleans. Although James Madison gave presidential pardons to Jean Lafitte and the buccaneers, their loot, surprisingly, was not returned. They were penniless yet again.

Some of the pirates began peaceful lives along the shores of Barataria Bay. The Lafittes, however, went back to piracy. Brother Dominique You was hired to rescue Napoleon from St. Helena and bring him to New Orleans, though Napoleon's death interfered with this plan. Pierre and Jean sailed to Texas and established a colony of privateers off the coast of Galveston.

Later, Jean became a labor leader in St. Louis. In 1847 he met with Marx and Engels and, admiring their work, opened an escrow account in Paris to help them. There is evidence that Lafitte tried to introduce Marx to the young Abraham Lincoln. Jean, who had substantially financed one of the earliest synagogues in Louisiana, is buried (perhaps) in a Jewish cemetery in Metairie.

There are many different versions of the life of Jean LaFitte. Some are full of fancy and others are full of facts.



150th Anniversary of the Founding of The Dohány Street Synagogue in Budapest

The Dohány Street Synagogue (Hungarian: *Dohány utcai Zsinagóga*/Nagy Zsinagóga, Hebrew: בית הכנסת הגדול לרחוקה תשובה חיב *bet hakneset hagadol šel budapešt*) or Tabakgasse Synagogue, is located in Erzsébetváros, the 7th district of Budapest. It is the largest synagogue in Europe and the second largest in the world, after the Temple Emanu-El in New York City. It seats 3,000 people and is a centre of Neolog Judaism.

Theodore Herzl's house of birth was next to the Dohány street Synagogue. In the place of his house stands the Jewish Museum, which holds the *Jewish Religious and Historical Collection*, built in 1930 in accordance with the synagogue's architectural style and attached in 1931 to the main building.

The arcade and the Heroes' Temple, which seats 250 people and is used for religious services on weekdays and during the winter time, was added the Dohány Street Synagogue complex in 1931. The Heroes' Temple designed by Lázlo Vágó and Ferenc Faragó, serves as a memorial to Hungarian Jews who gave their lives during World War

The Raoul Wallenberg Emlékpark (memory park) in the rear courtyard holds the *Memorial of the Hungarian Jewish Martyrs* — at least 400,000 Hungarian Jews were murdered by the Nazis.[8] Made by Imre Varga, it resembles a weeping willow whose leaves bear inscriptions with the names of victims. There is also a memorial to Wallenberg and other Righteous Among the Nations, among them Swiss Vice-consul Carl Lutz, who saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews during World War II.

The Synagogue follows two different architectural styles, reflecting both the romantic style which was very popular in Central Europe during that period, with a mildly Oriental flavor, as well as the strong Eastern traditions of historical synagogue architecture. The use of various brick colors and the wrought iron structures in the interior spaces were ground-breaking moves in the architecture of the period.

The Jewish community in Pest decided on the construction of the Synagogue in 1845, and the local authorities issued the building permit in 1853. Plans were prepared by József Hild, Frigyes Feszl and Ludwig Förster, with the final decision in favor of the Moorish-style plans of Förster (1797-1863), a German architect who was a professor at the Academy in Vienna.

Construction began in 1854, under the supervision of Ignác

Wechselmann. After Förster withdrew from the project in 1857, Frigyes Feszl (1821-1884) completed the rich, Oriental-style interior decoration and the Ark. The original organ was built in Thuringia on the basis of plans by Gotthart Wöhler.

Ceremonial consecration of the Synagogue occurred on 6 September 1859. Between 1929 and 1931 the environs of the Synagogue were changed, as the present Jewish museum and the domed Church of Heroes were built and the garden surrounded with columns was also created at that time.

During World War II, the original synagogue was bombed by the pro-Nazi Arrow Cross Party on 3 February, 1939. Used as a base for German Radio and also as a stable during World War II, the building suffered some severe damage from aerial raids during the Nazi Occupation but especially during the Siege of Budapest, although it was not destroyed completely. Reconstruction started almost immediately after the war ended. A full-scale renovation was undertaken in 1991-1996, and the building is now a protected historical monument.

Over the last one hundred and fifty years, the Synagogue has been the scene of many historical and sacral events, and many joyous and tragic moments in Hungarian history have occurred with its walls. Today, the Synagogue is a symbol of the Hungarian Jewish community and Hungarian Jewish culture.

In celebration of the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the Synagogue, the Magyar Nemzeti Bank is issuing a silver commemorative coin, as a part of the series on the masterpieces of Hungarian religious architecture. The coin was designed by the sculptor György Szabó, with the front depicting the rose window above the Synagogue's main entrance. The obverse of the coin shows the facade originally designed by Förster, together with some details of the adjacent buildings.



The History of the Ben and Sylvia Odesser Award

by Robert D. Leonard Jr.

Ben Odesser of Chicago and later Skokie, Illinois (December 27, 1910 – January 9, 1990), was an active member, exhibitor, and vest-pocket dealer at several Chicago-area coin clubs from the 1950s through the 1980s, and a regular attendee at the annual ANA summer convention. Ben was interested in all coins, tokens, and medals and founded the Chicago Coin Bourse in 1962, which he conducted monthly almost until his death, but his primary loves were tokens, medals, and Judaic numismatics. A 1961 charter member (27) of the Token and Medal Society (TAMS), Ben served as an officer of TAMS continuously from 1964 until his death.

He was a member of the American Israel Numismatic Association (AINA) and the Israel Numismatic Society of Illinois, contributing three articles to *The Shekel* from 1974 through 1978. In 1981, Ben participated in AINA's Bar Mitzvah Study Tour of Israel, and on a later AINA tour, March 18, 1985 – at the age of 74! – he made Bar-Mitzvah in Jerusalem (*The Shekel* 18:3 [May-June 1985], pp. 11-12).

After his beloved wife Sylvia died of cancer in 1978, Ben honored her memory by making a substantial donation to TAMS to establish the **Sylvia Odesser Award For Judaic Numismatics and Exonumia**, presenting the first award personally at the 1979 TAMS banquet; he was the sole judge and presenter. Many distinguished numismatists were so honored.

Originally Ben's intent was to recognize outstanding exhibitors of Judaic exonumia (broadly defined – coin club "show and tell" exhibits were considered). But gradually Judaic exonomic exhibits became scarcer, particularly after the collapse of the AINA member clubs and the Greater New York Coin Convention in the later 1970s and 1980s. At some point the award began to be conferred on the writer of the best article in *The Shekel*, and in recent years this became standard.

After Ben's death TAMS renamed the award the **Ben and Sylvia Odesser Award**, continuing to present plaques from Ben's original endowment. At first Moe Weinschel headed a committee of collectors who were members of both AINA and TAMS to determine the winners, and Moe attended the TAMS banquet to make the presentation, but after his death October 16, 2001, TAMS President Cindy Grellman (Wibker) asked me, as a past Odesser Award winner, to take over, and I have been involved ever since.

On learning that the award had changed from Judaic exhibiting to the best article in a non-TAMS publication, I resolved to increase TAMS' involvement and emphasize Judaic exonomia, if possible. First having made a list of all Odesser Award winners, I established the following approach: (1) examine every issue of *The Shekel* for the previous year; (2) review the articles, eliminating any written by previous winners (only one person, Ed Janis, has ever received the Odesser Award twice, before my time – I refused to accept it a second time myself); (3) rank them, favoring those featuring medals or tokens; and (4) present a ranked list of nominations to *Shekel* editor Edward Schuman, who makes the final selection. This process has worked well.

In recent years, the TAMS Board of Governors began to question whether TAMS should continue the Ben and Sylvia Odesser Award. In fact, in 2008 the TAMS Board voted to relinquish the award to AINA, but after the vote AINA proposed to make it a joint TAMS-AINA award, subject to the approval of both boards. After some discussion, in 2009 the Boards of both AINA and TAMS voted to give the Ben and Sylvia Odesser Award jointly and split the cost, and the first such award was presented at the TAMS Banquet at the Los Angeles ANA convention. The award plaque now has two medals, one from AINA and one from TAMS, making it even more beautiful and meaningful. I think that Ben would be pleased!

Winners of the Sylvia Odesser/Ben and Sylvia Odesser Award

1979	Arnold Kagan	1995	Shmuel Aviezer
1980	Rich Hartzog	1996	David Hendin
1981	Manfred Anson	1997	Ed Janis (again)
1982	Stanley Yulish	1998	Donna Sims
1983	Alan R. Weinberg	1999	Dr. Alan H. Burghauser
1984	Howard M. Berlin	2000	Marvin Tameanko
1985	Morton J. Zerder	2001	Harold Musnitsky
1986	Robert D. Leonard Jr.	2002	Edgar Guest
1987	Julius Turoff	2003	Marc A. Randolph, Esq.
1988	Ed Janis	2004	Simcha Kuritzky
1989	Mel Wacks	2005	Dr. Samuel Halperin
1990	Edward Schuman	2006	Dr. Ira Rezak
1991	Peter S. Horvitz	2007	David L. Nathan, M.D.
1992	Dr. Emanuel Smith	2008	Ady Bar-Tov
1993	Lance Campbell	2009	Stephen Fregger
1994	Dr. Gary P. Laroff		

Editor's note: We receive perhaps a half dozen or more letters each year from older members of AINA asking where to dispose of their collection of Israel coins and medals. You could offer them to the dealers who advertise in the SHEKEL. You could list your collection for sale on Ebay and if all efforts of selling them fail, you could do as the collector in the article below.

THE COLLECTOR

By Shmuel Aviezer

Once there was a man who, for years, sporadically, collected coins (new and old), banknotes (crisp and/or outdated), numismatic items of different value, of his country and of countries at large, all by chance.

One day, while he was scrutinizing his "collection", an idea hit him; why not distribute all what he had collected, among his eight nieces and nephews.

He prepared eight identical boxes of similar size and shape, and began to fill them, at random and with great care ,with some banknotes, new and used, some circulation coins, some commemorative coins (in mint condition), some foreign coins of different countries, and some numismatic items, until his "collection" ceased to exist as such.

He carefully closed the boxes and sealed them to create eight identical packages.

He called his eight nieces and nephews and asked each of them to choose one box randomly. He told them that those boxes represent his gift to them, emphasizing the fact that their contents are of different, but valuable, items, and should be carefully preserved or dealt with only in time of need and only after consulting experts to determine specific values for each item.

When they opened the boxes a cry of surprise, with emotion of pleasure, engulfed them. Through they were not exactly aware of what treasure fell in their hands, they individually and warmly hugged their uncle.

And when he saw their reaction he was filled with exalted joy and suddenly realized the impact of two sayings: It is better to give than to receive; and happiness shared is happiness doubled.

Itzchak Tarkay

Itzchak Tarkay was born in 1935 into a Serbian Jewish family. In 1944 at the age of 9, Tarkay and his family as Jews were sent to the Mathausen Concentration Camp. The Allied liberation freed them a year later. In 1949 his family immigrated to Israel, living in a kibbutz for several years.

In 1951 he was awarded a scholarship to the Bezalel Art Academy where he studied under the artist Schwartzman. Afterwards, he attended the Avni Institute of Art graduating in 1956, Tarkay learned a great deal from many famous artists of the time, such as Mokady, Janko, Schtreichman and Stematsky.

Today Tarkay has achieved recognition as a leading representative of a new generation of figurative artists. The inspiration for his work clearly lies with French Impressionism, and Post-Impressionism, particularly the color sophistication of Matisse and the drawing style of Toulouse-Lautrec, while summing up the characteristics of his model subject without relying on the precise copying of natural forms, or the patient assembling of exact detail.

As well as being a painter and watercolorist, Tarkay is a master graphic artist and his rich tapestry of form and color is achieved primarily through the use of the serigraph. In his serigraphs, many colors are laid over one another and used to create texture and transparency.

After exhibiting both in Israel and abroad, he received recognition at the International Art Exposition in New York in 1986 and 1987 for works in several forms of media, including oil, acrylic and watercolor. Today, Tarkay is considered one of the most influential artists of the early 21st Century and has inspired dozens of artists throughout the world, with his contemplative depiction of the female figure. Three hardcover books have been written on Tarkay and his art, the most recent, Tarkay, Profile of an Artist was published in 1997.

Israel has issued medals featuring well known artists. The Tarkay medallion is illustrated.



JEWISH HISTORY IN RIGA

Riga, the capital of Latvia was officially founded in 1201. In common with many other places in Eastern Europe, the city came to be ruled by a variety of different nations. Although the name Livonia still describes a region of modern-day Latvia, the State of Livonia (Livland), dominated by the Order of the Teutonic Knights and covering much of the territory of modern-day Latvia and Estonia, effectively ceased to exist in the late 16th century, when Riga became a part of Poland. Polish rule lasted only a few years, for following a lengthy war between Poland and Sweden, the city fell under Swedish rule in 1610. In 1710, as part of an ongoing war between Sweden and Russia, the city was incorporated within the Russian Empire, where it was to remain until 1918.

In 1904, a small group of wealthy Jewish merchants fought a maze of rules to open a synagogue in Peitavas Street in Riga's Old Town. It would be far from the Moscow District where they lived, but close to the shops and markets where they worked. In Czarist Russia, synagogues were prohibited from being built too close to churches, so they had to get permission from the pastor of a Reform Church with which it would share the block. The German architect Wilhelm Neumann had been contracted and a total of 150,000 rubles had been spent. Finally, in the days before Rosh Hashannah, they had gotten everything ready when the local government decided to forbid the synagogue's opening.

A meeting between the wealthy benefactors of the synagogue and a local governor followed. An article in a Yiddish newspaper from the 1930s recounts a key speech: "Young people are being led astray by the revolutionary movement. And with each day, the movement's influence is stronger and stronger. So in order to restrain young people from these ideas, we decided to build a beautiful synagogue."

The answer, perhaps goaded by fears of the incipient threat of 1905: "Go and pray."

Forty years later, it was the only synagogue among hundreds in the country to survive World War II. An obscure Psalm was written atop the marble alter, "Blessed art you the good, for you did not allow teeth to tear me." It was claimed that a pastor at that local Reform Church had instructed the Nazis not to burn the synagogue as it put his church in danger.

Riga developed enormously both in terms of economic importance and population during this latter period, becoming the second largest city in north-western Russia after St. Petersburg. During the course of WWI,

in 1917 the city was occupied for a short time by German forces. After an armed struggle with the then newly created Soviet Union lasting two years, the Republic of Latvia was declared in August 1920 with Riga as its capital. On 17 June 1940, Soviet forces occupied Latvia, which was renamed the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Having first settled in Riga in the 17th century, Jews were expelled from the city in 1742, but were later permitted to return. By 1935 the flourishing Jewish population of Riga numbered 43,000, representing about half of the total Jewish inhabitants of Latvia and 11% of the city's total population.

In his analysis of Latvian-Jewish relations in the pre-WW2 years, the historian Frank Gordon comments: The two decades of independent Latvia's existence are remembered by both Latvians and Jews as the 'good years'. Latvians were masters in their own land and governed well, and Jews and other minorities were guaranteed all the rights envisioned by the League of Nations for ethnic groups in Eastern Europe. Jewish religion, culture, and national aspirations were not hampered or fettered in these years. The majority of Jewish inhabitants supported the new Latvian state, with about 1,200 Jews taking part in the Latvian war of independence.

From 1918 to 1940, Riga was the capital of independent Latvia. Before World War II, about 40,000 Jews lived in Riga, representing slightly more than 10 percent of the city's population. The community had a well-developed network of Hebrew and Yiddish schools, as well as a lively Jewish cultural life. Jews were integrated into most aspects of life in Riga and even sat on the city council.

Moreover, on the invasion of Soviet territory, one advantage for Germany was the state of public feeling in the Baltic States. An overwhelming majority of Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians -- perhaps more than 95% -- looked upon the Germans as liberators. Such real sympathies as the Germans met in the Baltic countries immediately after their conquest had certainly not come their way since Hitler's assumption of power. No one could mistake the spontaneity of these heartfelt feelings.

In August 1940, the Soviet Union annexed Latvia, and Riga became the capital of the Latvian SSR. German forces occupied Riga in early July 1941. Thereafter, Riga became the capital of the Reich Commissariat Ostland, a German civilian administration. German Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units), together with Latvian auxiliaries, shot several thousand Jews shortly after German forces entered the city.

In mid-August, the Germans ordered the establishment of a ghetto in the southeastern area of the city. This ghetto was sealed in October 1941, imprisoning some 30,000 Jews. In late November and early December of

1941, the Germans announced that they intended to settle the majority of ghetto inhabitants "further east." Most of Riga's Jews were murdered in a place called Rumbula, a "killing fields" located only seven miles outside the city. There, on two separate days, first on November 30th and then on December 8th, 1941 the Nazis - with the help of the local Latvians, mowed down 25,000 Jews.

The Jewish Ghetto in Riga, like most Jewish ghettos created during World War II, was situated in the most densely populated area of the Jewish community. In Riga that area was called Maskava. In Riga, like in every other city under their control, in order for the Nazi massacre of the Jews to succeed the Germans needed local assistance. The assistance that the Latvian community of Riga gave to Nazi Command came in the form of the Latvian Legion, proud members of the German SS.

The surviving 4,000-5,000 Jews were incarcerated in an area of the ghetto known as the "small" or "Latvian" ghetto. The Germans also deported some 20,000 Jews from Germany, Austria, and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to Riga. The section of the ghetto where these foreign Jews were imprisoned was called the "big" or "German" ghetto, established as a separate entity from the "Latvian" ghetto.

A transport of 1,000 Jews from the German Reich shared the fate of the murdered Riga Jews. Most of the remaining German Jews deported to Riga were also later killed in the Rumbula Forest. Several hundred Jews in the Riga ghetto organized resistance activities against the Germans. Small groups sought to escape from the ghetto and join partisans in the surrounding forests. In October 1942, German police discovered a small band of members of the Jewish underground outside the ghetto.

In reprisal for partisan activities, the Germans seized and killed more than 100 people from the ghetto, and executed almost all Jewish policemen on suspicion of participating in resistance activities. The *Ältestenrat* did its best to make living conditions bearable. A hospital, medical clinic, pharmacy and home for the aged were established. Men and women were supplied to the Germans for forced labour, including the construction of the Salaspils concentration camp near the city. Quite often the ghetto was "visited" by Germans and Latvian policemen who plundered the Jews. They took everything: furs, pictures, crystal, blankets, linen, and musical instruments. Only some of these things were sent to Germany as "a gift from the Latvian nation for the Germans who fought against the Bolsheviks." Most of the stolen Jewish property was taken by Latvians and *Gestapo* men.

In the summer of 1943, the Germans deported some ghetto inhabitants to the Kaiserwald concentration camp, which had been established in March in the north of the city. Others were deported to

Kaiserwald subcamps nearby. The Germans destroyed the ghetto in December 1943, and deported the last Jews to Kaiserwald. The surviving Jews in Latvia, from the destroyed ghettos of Riga, Liepaja, and Dvinsk, were concentrated in Kaiserwald and its subcamps.

In 1944, in an attempt to destroy evidence of mass murder, the Germans forced prisoners to reopen mass graves in Rumbula and burn the bodies. Once the work was completed, the Germans then killed these prisoners. In the summer of 1944, the Germans murdered thousands of Jews then held in Kaiserwald and its subcamps. Those remaining alive were later deported to the Stutthof concentration camp in Germany. On October 13, 1944, the Soviet army liberated Riga. By this time almost all of Riga's Jews had been murdered by the Nazis.

About 600 Jews had survived in the whole of Latvia, with a further 400 Latvian Jews surviving in German concentration camps. In the post-war years, the authorities encouraged citizens from other regions of the Soviet Union to settle in Riga. Today there are an estimated 9,000 Jewish inhabitants of the city out of a total population of 800,000. Memorials were erected to the victims of **Rumbula** in 1962 and to those of the **Bikernieki Forest** in 2001. The **Salaspils Memorial Park** was opened on 31 October 1961. The most recent memorial at **Kaiserwald** was dedicated on 29 June 2005. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Latvia regained its independence in 1991, and in 2004 became a member of both NATO and the European Union.

A Riga City three ruble banknote, issued in 1919 is the numismatic illustration for this article.



THE WARSAW GHETTO

On October 2, 1940 walls of the Warsaw houses were posted over with bills announcing the establishment of the Jewish district. The action of the displacement lasted more than one month. During this time, according to the official German documents, 113,000 Poles and 138,000 Jews had to leave their homes. The Jews were allowed to take along only a package of a refugee and bedding. Isolating people in the ghettos - the districts cut off from the rest of the city - was the next act of the discrimination of the Jews.

As early as November, 1939 Germans forced the Jews from the General Government to wear white arm bands with a blue Star of David. Jews were dismissed for their jobs and dispossessed of their bank savings. They were not allowed to leave the marked areas of the city. Their shops and businesses were confiscated.

In the beginning the Jewish district was surrounded by wire entanglements, at a later date by three-foot high brick wall topped with a barbed wire. All streets exits, windows and doors bordering upon the Aryan side were blocked up. The Jewish community had to bear all the expenses of building the wall.

On November 16, 1940 the Warsaw ghetto became a closed area. Jews were allowed to leave only with permits. There were 15 exits from the ghetto through gates guarded by German Schutzpolizei, Polish police and Jewish militia organized in the ghetto (Ordnungsdienst). On October 15, 1941 Hans Frank, the Governor, declared that leaving the ghetto without permits is punishable by death. The same penalty is applied for assistance to Jews who have left Jewish residential areas.

The Warsaw ghetto, where about 450 000 people were imprisoned, was the largest ghetto in Europe. Besides the Warsaw Jews there lived refugees from others Polish towns, people moved to Warsaw from neighboring towns; deported from Germany and from the Bohemian and Moravia Protectorate. The small area of the ghetto, about 5 km, was very crowded. In one room lived 6-7 persons on average. The sanitary and hygienic conditions were very bad, especially in those places, where refugees and homeless persons inhabited.

The ghetto was administered by the Judenrat convened by Germans, with Adam Czerniakow as a chairman. The Judenrat was strictly subordinated to Germans and its autonomy was limited.

Most of the ghetto' inhabitants lost their pre-war employments and

savings, the refugees very often lost their all their possession. People became impoverished very quickly as it was difficult to get a job in the ghetto. The nutritional value of daily rations did not exceed 230 calories. There were rationing coupons only for bread and sugar, the other articles were found very rarely. People had to buy food on a black market, but it was too expensive for most of them. They starved. Till the beginning of the liquidation action in July, 1942 more than 100 old people died of starvation each day.

It seems impossible but people closed inside the walls of the ghetto tried to live normally or almost normally. Doctors worked in hospitals, actors performed in theatres, musicians gave concerts, artists painted, sculptured and organized exhibitions. German authorities liquidated most of the educational, religious and cultural institutions in the ghetto. Schools, libraries, cinemas were closed. On January 1940, all synagogues were closed. The Jewish community organized an illegal system of elementary and high schools, universities and religious school (jeshivas). There was an officially functioning school of nursing in the ghetto. In October 1941, the authorities gave permission to open the elementary and technical schools.

"Gazeta Żydowska" ("Jewish Gazette"), edited in Polish, was the only one official newspaper in the ghetto. But almost all political parties and youth organizations, acting in conspiracy, edited their newspapers and bulletins. Theatres in the ghetto were opened but they were only allowed to present plays by Jewish authors. Some theatres performed in Polish others in Yiddish. German authorities permitted the Jewish Symphony Orchestra to organize. Charity institutions were very active, the small one like house committees as well as larger organizations like the Jewish Mutual Aid Society. They tried to help the poorest groups of the community.

Emanuel Ringelblum the researcher of the Jewish history (1900-1944) and his collaborators considered that collecting and saving documents relating to the ghetto reality would be the most important duty of the Jewish historians. They created the conspired Archives of the Ghetto called Ringelblum's Archives. They collected and stored all records concerning the Warsaw ghetto and, as far as possible, documents regarding the different ghettos in Poland. In the Archives were collected public and personal documents, bills, invitations to concerts and performances, illegal press, papers, compositions, printings, advertisements, accounts and diaries. The Archives was hidden in three places. After the war only two parts were found. Presently the Archives are stored in the Jewish Historical Institute as a priceless record of

places. After the war only two parts were found. Presently the Archives are stored in the Jewish Historical Institute as a priceless record of everyday life in the Warsaw ghetto.

From the diary of Adam Czerniakow:

July 22, 1943. In the morning at 7.30, the borders of the small ghetto are surrounded by special detachments. It is said that Jews, with some exceptions, men, women and children will be deported to the East. Today, till 4 p.m. 600 people should be selected, and at least the same number will be selected every day." On July 22, 1942 Germans began a liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto. Every day trains took away 5000-6000 people from so called Umschlagplatz (at the crossing of Stawki, Dzika and Niska Streets) to Treblinka death camp. Within 6 weeks 300,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto were taken away and murdered in the gas chambers of Treblinka.

At the end of the liquidation (September 6, 1942) Germans ordered a registration of those who had survived in the ghetto. They had to gather in the area of Niska, Smocza, Gesia, Mila and Zamenhofa Streets. Until September 12 the great selection lasted and the so called "life numbers" were, shared out. Among others some workers of the Judenrat and workers from the German factories and workshops got them. People without "life numbers" were sent to Treblinka. Officially 35,000 people remained in the ghetto. Probably approximately the same quantity of people hid themselves in the bunkers. Jewish owners of "life numbers" were put up in barracks and worked in the Germans workshops.

The idea of the armed resistance and fight against Germans appeared very quickly in plans of the underground organizations in the ghetto. The first Jewish Fighting Organisation (ZOB) was set up on July 28, 1942. Most of its members were taken away to Treblinka during the liquidation of the ghetto. In autumn 1942, the political parties and youth organizations established the Jewish National Committee. The Jewish Fighting Organization was set up on December 2, 1942 as a common structure of armed parties - members of the Jewish National Committee. Mordechaj Anielewicz (1919-1943) from Hashomer Hacair became the chief commander. His second in command and liaison officer on the "Aryan side" was Ischak Cukierman (1914-1981) from Dror. The second armed organization in the ghetto was the Jewish Army Union (ZZW) composed of approximately 250 members, under the command of: Oawid Apfelbaum, lieutenant of the Polish Army.

On January 18, 1943, the first fighting with Germans took place. The German detachments marching in the ghetto were stopped by ZOB fighters. Thanks to the defense the liquidation of the ghetto was

postponed.

On April 19, 1943, the German detachments surrounded the ghetto. The last battle began. Fighters from ZOB and ZZW fought with the predominant enemy. In May, 1943 in uncovered bunker at 18 Mila Street, Mordechaj Anielewicz and his comrades committed suicide.

On May 16, 1943 general Jurgen Stroop ordered the Great Warsaw Synagogue in Thomackie Street blown up. He wanted that event to be "a triumphal final" of the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto. Some of the fighters (72) escaped through the sewers to the "Aryan side" (April, 29 and May, 10). A few of the fighting groups remained in the ghetto and fought till autumn, 1943.

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising collapsed with the surviving people taken away to the work camps. The Germans destroyed all of the houses and buildings of the Jewish district. The area of the ghetto was constantly guarded. In the ruins the prisoners from Pawiak prison were being shot. On July, 1943 in prison in Gesia Street (presently Anielewicza Street) Germans established a branch of the concentration camp Majdanek, called "Gesiowka". In August 1944, the prisoners from this camp - Greek, Belgian, French and Dutch Jews were liberated by soldiers from the "Zoska" battalion. During the Warsaw Uprising the former-Jewish quarter was almost completely destroyed.

There have been many medals issued to commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. They were issued by several countries to commemorate a date, the 20th Anniversary, the 30th Anniversary etc, of the uprising. To commemorate the 65th Anniversary, the Warsaw mint issued a 20zl. silver coin on April 15th, 2008. The coin was released by the National Bank of Poland.



65th ANNIVERSARY OF WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

65 ROCZNICA POWSTANIA W GETCIE WARSZAWSKIM

JAMES JOSEPH SYLVESTER, JEWISH MATHEMATICIAN

James Sylvester was born James Joseph. His father, Abraham Joseph, was a merchant. The Joseph family were Jewish, and James's career suffered for his being Jewish. James adopted the surname Sylvester when his older brother did so upon emigration to the United States—a country which at that time required all immigrants to have a given name, a middle name, and a surname. At the age of 14, Sylvester started attending the University of London, where he was a student of Augustus De Morgan. His family withdrew him from the University after he was accused of threatening a fellow student with a knife. Following this, he attended the Liverpool Royal Institution. Though he excelled academically, Sylvester was tormented by his fellow students on account of his Jewish origins.

Because of the abuse he received, he ran away, taking a boat to Dublin. While there, he was recognized on the street by Richard Keatinge who was Judge of the Prerogative Court of Ireland, and whose wife was a cousin of Sylvester; Keatinge arranged for the boy's return to Liverpool.

Sylvester began his study of mathematics at St John's College, Cambridge in 1831. Although his studies were interrupted for almost two years due to a prolonged illness, he nevertheless ranked second in Cambridge's famous mathematical examination, the tripos, for which he sat in 1837. However, Sylvester was not issued a degree, because graduates at that time were required to state their acceptance of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, and Sylvester, being Jewish refused to do so. For the same reason, he was unable to compete for a Fellowship or obtain a Smith's prize.

In 1838 Sylvester became professor of natural philosophy at University College London UCL. In 1841, he was awarded a BA and an MA by Trinity College, Dublin. In the same year he moved to the United States to become a professor at the University of Virginia for about six months, and returned to England in November 1843.

On his return to England he studied law, alongside fellow British lawyer/mathematician Arthur Cayley, with whom he made significant contributions to matrix theory while working as an actuary. One of his private pupils was Florence Nightingale. He did not obtain a position teaching university mathematics until 1855, when he was appointed professor of mathematics at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, from which he retired in 1869, because the compulsory retirement age was 55. The Woolwich academy initially refused to pay Sylvester his full

pension, and only relented after a prolonged public controversy, during which Sylvester took his case to the letters page of *The Times*.

One of Sylvester's lifelong passions was for poetry; he read and translated works from the original French, German, Italian, Latin and Greek, and many of his mathematical papers contain illustrative quotes from classical poetry. In 1870, following his early retirement, Sylvester published a book entitled *The Laws of Verse* in which he attempted to codify a set of laws for prosody in poetry.

In 1877 Sylvester again crossed the Atlantic Ocean to become the inaugural professor of mathematics at the new Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. His salary was \$5,000 (quite generous for the time), which he demanded be paid in gold. In 1878 he founded the *American Journal of Mathematics*. The only other mathematical journal in the U.S. at that time was the *Analyst*, which eventually became the *Annals of Mathematics*.

In 1883, he returned to England to take up the Savilian Professor of Geometry at Oxford University. He held this chair until his death, although in 1892 the University appointed a deputy professor to the same chair. Sylvester invented a great number of mathematical terms such as discriminant. He has given a name to Euler's totient function $\phi(n)$. His collected scientific work fills four volumes. In 1880, the Royal Society of London awarded Sylvester the Copley Medal, its highest award for scientific achievement; in 1901, it instituted the Sylvester Medal in his memory, to encourage mathematical research. Sylvester House, a portion of an undergraduate dormitory at Johns Hopkins, is named in his honor.

The illustrated bronze medal of James Sylvester was sculpted by United States mint engraver Charles Barber.



Rechavam Ze'evy

Rechavam Ze'evy was born in Jerusalem in 1926. He was a fifth generation sabra, He joined the Palmach in 1942, and served in the Israeli Defense Forces after the creation of Israel. He was a veteran of the Palmah's Yiftah Brigade, and was one of its legendary scouts, known for a remarkable knowledge of every corner of the country.

In May 15, 1948 he was a platoon leader in the lost battle of Malkiyah. His task was to block, with 30 men, the local Arabs who came to help the Lebanese army attack. One of the soldiers from that battle described the view when the sun rose and all the mountain in front of them was black with Arabs. Ze'evi succeeded in his task, but the battle was lost. Instead of destroying the first battalion of the Palmach, that retreated with many wounded, the Lebanese army attacked Ze'evi's unit.

After graduating from the Command and General Staff College of the US Army, Ze'evy served as a career officer in the IDF, reaching the rank of Major-General. He won recognition as one of the main developers of anti-infiltration tactics in the Jordan Valley - tactics largely responsible for having turned Israel's border with Jordan into the quietest frontier. After the Six-Day War, while fighting Arab terror in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Ze'evy sought to ensure calm in the territories by granting the local government more authority. He also frequently visited the Beduin villages whose sons served with the IDF and sought to improve their conditions.

From 1964 to 1968 he carried out the duties of the Chief of the Department of Staff in the Israeli General staff. The next 5 years he served as the Commander of the Central Military District. He retired in September 1973, only to rejoin the army at the beginning of the Yom Kippur War. A close friend of IDF Chief of Staff David Elazar, he was appointed Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff and was rarely away from Elazar's side during the War. Ze'evi was a highly efficient staff officer. Ze'evi then served for several more months as the Chief of the Department of Staff. He finally retired, with the rank of major-general in 1974.

After retiring from army service, Rechavam Ze'evy served as Advisor to Prime Minister Rabin on Anti-Terror Matters and Intelligence from 1974-1977, and as Chairman of the Board of the Eretz-Israel Museum in Tel Aviv from 1981-1991. He published many articles in the local press, and was the editor of 65 books published by the Ministry of Defense and the Eretz-Israel Museum. Tel Aviv. 1987, he co-edited a

series of books describing various aspects of the Land of Israel, based on artifacts from the museum. Ze'evi is famous for having one the largest collection of books about Israel and its history.

In May 1999, Rechavam Ze'evi was elected to the Knesset as Chairman of the National Union - Yisrael Beiteinu Party. He was appointed Minister of Tourism in March 2001. On October 15, 2001, he submitted his resignation, which was to enter into effect on October 17, after 48 hours, at 1:30 P.M.

Ze'evi was shot in the Jerusalem Hyatt hotel on Mount Scopus on Wednesday, October 17, 2001 by four gunmen. He was rushed to the Hadassah Medical Center hospital where he died before 10 a.m. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine took credit for the killing and stated that it was in revenge for the assassination by Israel of Abu Ali Mustafa, killed by Israel in August that year. Thousands took part in his funeral.

The four of Ze'evi's killers fled to the Palestinian National Authority. Israel placed Yasser Arafat under siege in the Ramallah compound to force the handing over of the suspects. In April 2002 the US brokered a plan where the suspects were to be jailed in Jericho. They were imprisoned in a jail in Jericho and guarded by American and British forces. On March 14, 2006, the American and British guards left the jail, charging that the PNA was not sticking to the agreement reached with Israel. Shortly after, Israel launched Operation Bringing Home the Goods. Israeli troops stormed a Jericho prison and seized the prisoners who were sentenced to long terms in Israeli prisons.

The medal honoring Rechavam Ze'evi was struck in 2001. The reverse features a broken dog-tag and inscription "*The Lord gives strength to his people, the Lord blesses his people with peace.*"



The Lincoln Jewish Connection

The year 2009 marks the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln, who is acknowledged to be one of America's greatest Presidents. There have been many numismatic remembrances over the years, and here are two that are of particular interest to collectors of Judaica. The first is a 2009 Lincoln Cent featuring both obverse and reverse designs by Jewish artists.



*The original Lincoln Cent portrait by **Victor David Brenner** has been used continuously for 100 years! In 2009, Brenner's portrait will be combined with four different commemorative reverses, including this one designed by **Joel Iskowitz**.*

In 1834, Abraham Lincoln was elected to the Illinois General Assembly, and began studying the law in earnest. In September 1836, he received a law license and embarked on the career that would propel him to the White House. In April 1837, he settled in the new Illinois state capital, Springfield. Here, he met and married Mary Todd and their first child, Robert Todd Lincoln, was born in August 1843. Lincoln continued to make a name for himself as a lawyer, and in 1846 he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives as a member of the Whig Party.

Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas was up for reelection in 1858, and in June the state Republican convention nominated Lincoln for the seat. The series of famous Lincoln-Douglas debates took place that fall, and while he did not win the seat, Lincoln's logic, moral fervor, elegant language and debating skills transformed him into a national figure. At the 1860 Republican convention, he secured the nomination for President and was elected that fall.

The approved reverse design for aspect three representing the Illinois phase of Lincoln's life depicts him as a young professional standing in front of the state capitol building in Springfield. It was designed by Mint Artistic Infusion Program Master Designer Joel Iskowitz and sculpted by United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Don Everhart.



Color Sergeant Leopold Karpeles was instrumental in turning the tide of the May 1864 Wilderness Campaign, that saw his 57th Massachusetts Regiment suffer among the highest casualties. Some historians consider this Civil War battle as the turning point, when the North began its slow march toward victory. Karpeles' bravery is described in the hero's own words: "I marched in an inspired manner with my flag waving proudly ... providing courage for my comrades. I'm also a prime target for the enemy. My dedication to my country's flag rests on my ardent belief in this noblest of causes, equality for all."

While hospitalized with nearly total paralysis in Washington DC in the Spring of 1864, Karpeles was ministered to by a young volunteer -- Sara Mundheim, daughter of the local rabbi -- whom he later married. Leopold Karpeles died in February, 1909 and was buried in the cemetery of the Hebrew Congregation in Washington. His tombstone is unique, with a replica of the Congressional Medal of Honor emblazoned on its granite surface.

Karpeles idolized Abraham Lincoln, and so the reverse of the Jewish-American Hall of Fame medal designed by Alex Shagin and issued in 2002, features an excerpt of a letter, in Lincoln's own handwriting, written on May 13, 1862 acknowledging the prayers of the Congregation Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia for the Union cause: "Thank you heartily for your prayers ... A. Lincoln."

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The Reverse: the image of the coat of arms of the Jewish Autonomous Region. The inscriptions along the rim: above - "РОССИЙСКАЯ ФЕДЕРАЦИЯ" (THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION), below - "ЕВРЕЙСКАЯ АВТОНОМНАЯ ОБЛАСТЬ" (THE JEWISH AUTONOMOUS REGION)



Andres Laguna, Jewish Physician

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, many Jewish physicians in Europe, including Crypto-Jews and New Christians, began to manifest specific concerns about mental illness in the kind of terms modern psychiatrists and psychoanalysts recognize, even when, as with Andrés Fernandez Laguna. The discussion seems embedded in the translation of ancient Greek authors or their medieval Arabic, Hebrew and Latin versions and early Renaissance commentators. Unlike so-called Old Christians, who were part of the chaotic world of Renaissance medical humanism, these previously Jewish medical practitioners and theoreticians were placed in circumstances that tended to allow them to break away from many old ideas current in the society around them.

Schooled in Greek and Latin in Spanish universities, Laguna also did his medical training at the University of Alcala and later also in France and Italy; but, as was the custom, he must have apprenticed himself to his physician father and thereby come into contact, both through the oral advice that came with such an intimate working relationship and through the Hebrew treatises on Jewish medicine with rabbinic lore and attitudes. Jewish medical traditions had always leaned towards physical and physiological explanations of disease,

Despite some mystical and folkloric tendencies characteristic of European Jewry as a whole, Jewish doctors mostly followed the Maimonidean tradition in eschewing astrology and other occult sciences, as well as in being wary of attempts to blame witches, wizards, demons and other evil powers for diseases—and as supernatural powers to be manipulated in treatment and cure.

Andrés Laguna was born in Segovia, according to Diego de Colmenares and other historians, to a converted Jewish doctor. He studied the arts for two years in Salamanca, then moved to Paris in 1530, where he graduated from the arts and went on to study medicine. He also learned classical languages such as Greek and Latin with much fluency. Laguna returned to Spain in 1536, then traveled to England, lived some years in the Netherlands and collected herbal remedies in all the places he stayed. Between 1540 and 1545 he resided in Metz, becoming a doctor of the city, and from 1545 to 1554 he stayed in Italy, where he received a doctorate from the University of Bologna and was honored by the Popes Paul III and Julius III, becoming doctor to the latter pontiff. He was provided with accommodations in Venice by the Spanish ambassador Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, a preeminent humanist and proprietor of a

nutritional library. Laguna finally returned to Spain in 1557, after another extended stay in the Netherlands lasting three years; he served as doctor to Charles V and Phillip II. Lastly, he created the Botanical Garden of Aranjuez. He died, probably in Guadalajara, Spain, in 1559. His remains were interred in the church of San Miguel, in Segovia.



Andrés Laguna jewish doctor. RARE old spanish medal

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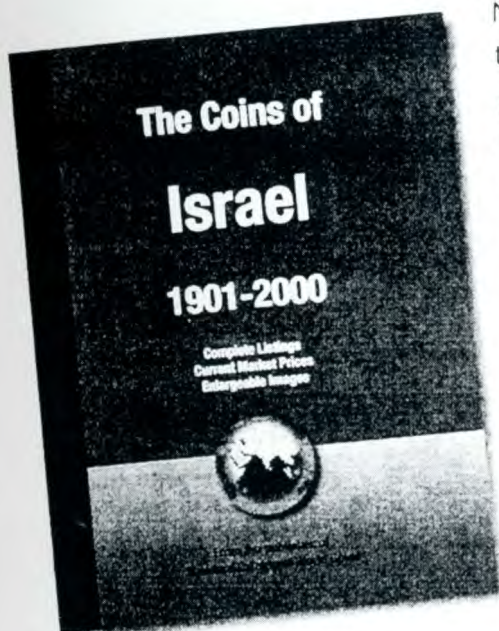
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